

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A paperboard carton with a first end and a second end for carrying a plurality of containers, the carton comprising:

(a) a bottom panel, top panel, a first side panel attached to the top panel by a first fold line, and a second side panel attached to the top panel by a second fold line, the first end of the carton being closed by a first top end flap attached to the top panel ~~by~~ along a first top end fold line, a first side end flap foldably attached to the first side panel, a second ~~first~~ side end flap foldably attached to the second side panel, a first bottom end flap foldably attached to the bottom panel, with means for securing the first top end flap, the first side end flap ~~foldably attached to the first side panel~~, the second ~~first~~ side end flap ~~foldably attached to the second side panel~~, and the first bottom end flap at the first end of the carton in the closed position, the second end of the carton being closed by a second top end flap attached to the top panel by a second top end fold line, a third ~~second~~ side end flap foldably attached to the first side panel, a fourth ~~second~~ side end flap foldably attached to the second side panel, a second bottom end flap foldably attached to the bottom panel, with means for securing the second top end flap, the third ~~second~~ side end flap ~~foldably attached to the first side panel~~, the fourth ~~second~~ side end flap ~~foldably attached to the second side panel~~, and the second bottom end flap at the second end of the carton in the closed position;

(b) said carton having a first handle aperture in the first top end flap and a second handle aperture in the second top end flap for carrying the carton when loaded with containers with the carton secured in the closed position, ~~the carton being defined with~~ the first side end flap having a at least one first side end aperture sufficiently aligned with the first handle aperture in said first top end flap so that a person's hand can be extended through the first handle aperture in

said first top end flap and said ~~at least one~~ first side end aperture in the first side end flap and the carton being defined with the third ~~second~~ side end flap having a third ~~at least one second~~ side end aperture sufficiently aligned with the second handle aperture in said second top end flap so that a person's hand can be extended through the second handle aperture in said second top end flap and the third ~~at least one second~~ side end aperture in the second side end flap; and

(c) said carton having a paperboard insert which is secured to at least one of the first top end flap and the first side end flap on the first end of the carton and which is secured to at least one of the second top end flap and the third ~~second~~ side end flap on the second end of the carton, said insert having a first insert aperture that is sufficiently aligned with the first handle aperture in said first top end flap and the first side end aperture in said first side end flap so that a person's hand can be inserted through the first handle aperture, the first side end aperture, and the first insert aperture when the carton is secured in the closed position and having a second insert aperture that is sufficiently aligned with the second handle aperture in said second top end flap and the third ~~second~~ side end aperture in said second side end flap so that a person's hand can be inserted through the second handle aperture, the third ~~second~~ side end aperture, and the second insert aperture when the carton is secured in the closed position, said paperboard insert and said first side end flap reinforcing the first top end flap to form three layers of paperboard between the first top end fold line and the first handle aperture and said paperboard insert and said third ~~second~~ side end flap reinforcing the second top end flap to form three layers of paperboard between the second top end fold line and the second handle aperture, to preserve the integrity of said first handle aperture and said second handle aperture, respectively, when the carton is loaded with the plurality of containers;

wherein the insert is secured by securing means to the first side end flap on the first end of the carton and to the third ~~second~~ side end flap on the second end of the carton.

5. (Currently Amended) A paperboard carton with a first end and a second end for carrying a plurality of containers, the carton comprising:

(a) a bottom panel, top panel, a first side panel attached to the top panel by a first fold line, and a second side panel attached to the top panel by a second fold line, the first end of the carton being closed by a first top end flap attached to the top panel along ~~by~~ a first top end fold

line, a first side end flap foldably attached to the first side panel, a second ~~first~~ side end flap foldably attached to the second side panel, a first bottom end flap foldably attached to the bottom panel, with means for securing the first top end flap, the first side end flap ~~foldably attached to the first side panel~~, the second ~~first~~ side end flap ~~foldably attached to the second side panel~~, and the first bottom end flap at the first end of the carton in the closed position, the second end of the carton being closed by a second top end flap attached to the top panel by a second top end fold line, a third ~~second~~ side end flap foldably attached to the first side panel, a fourth ~~second~~ side end flap foldably attached to the second side panel, a second bottom end flap foldably attached to the bottom panel, with means for securing the second top end flap, the third ~~second~~ side end flap ~~foldably attached to the first side panel~~, the fourth ~~second~~ side end flap ~~foldably attached to the second side panel~~, and the second bottom end flap at the second end of the carton in the closed position;

(b) said carton having a first handle aperture in the first top end flap and a second handle aperture in the second top end flap for carrying the carton when loaded with containers with the carton secured in the closed position, ~~the carton being defined with~~ the first side end flap having a ~~at least one~~ first side end aperture sufficiently aligned with the first handle aperture in said first top end flap so that a person's hand can be extended through the first handle aperture in said first top end flap and said ~~at least one~~ first side end aperture in the first side end flap and the carton being defined with the third ~~second~~ side end flap having a ~~third~~ ~~at least one~~ ~~second~~ side end aperture sufficiently aligned with the second handle aperture in said second top end flap so that a person's hand can be extended through the second handle aperture in said second top end flap and the third ~~at least one~~ ~~second~~ side end aperture in the second side end flap; and

(c) said carton having a paperboard insert which is secured to the first top end flap and the first side end flap on the first end of the carton and which is secured to the second top end flap and the third ~~second~~ side end flap on the second end of the carton, said insert having a first insert aperture that is sufficiently aligned with the first handle aperture in said first top end flap and the first side end aperture in said first side end flap so that a person's hand can be inserted through the first handle aperture, the first side end aperture, and the first insert aperture when the carton is secured in the closed position and having a second insert aperture that is sufficiently aligned with the second handle aperture in said top end flap and the third ~~second~~ side

end aperture in said second side end flap so that a person's hand can be inserted through the second handle aperture, the third ~~second~~ side end aperture, and the second insert aperture when the carton is secured in the closed position, said paperboard insert and said first side end flap reinforcing the first top end flap to form three layers of paperboard between the first top end fold line and the first handle aperture and said paperboard insert and said third ~~second~~ side end flap reinforcing the second top end flap to form three layers of paperboard between the second top end fold line and the second handle aperture, to preserve the integrity of said first handle aperture and said second handle aperture, respectively, when the carton is loaded with the plurality of containers;

wherein the paperboard insert is secured by securing means to the first top end flap and to the second top end flap.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 5 in which the first top end flap has an inside and outside surface and the second top end flap has an inside and outside surface and the paperboard insert is secured to the inside surface of the first top end flap and the second top end flap.

8. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 7 in which the first insert aperture and the second insert aperture are larger than the corresponding first handle aperture and the second handle aperture in the first top end flap and in the second top end flap.

9. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 8 which has interconnected tear lines in the top panel which extend into the first side panel and the second side panel to form a dispenser flap which when torn open allows the removal of containers from the carton.

10. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 9 in which the interconnected tear lines extend into the first side panel and the second side panel and are interconnected in said top panel to form two dispenser flaps.

11. (Original) The carton of claim 10 in which a finger flap is formed by a tear line adjacent to a location in the interconnected tear lines that forms two flaps so that when the finger flap is opened the interconnected tear lines can be torn opening either or both dispenser flaps so containers can be removed from the carton.

12. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 5 in which the insert extends across the top panel from the first top end flap to the second top end flap.

13. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 12 in which the insert apertures are larger than the corresponding first handle aperture and the second handle aperture in the first top end flap and in the second top end flap.

14. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 13 in which the insert has a fold line that is adjacent the fold line between the top panel and the first top end flap and the second top end flap with each fold line in said insert being interspersed with a plurality of apertures to facilitate closing and securing the first top end flap on the first end of the carton together and the second top end flap on the second end of the carton.

15. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 14 in which the first top end flap and the second top end flap and the top panel have an inside and outside surface and the insert is secured to the inside surfaces of the top panel and the first top end flap and the second top end flap.

16. (Original) The carton of claim 15 which has interconnected tear lines in the top panel for forming at least one dispenser flap for removing containers from the carton when the flap is opened with the insert having corresponding interconnected tear lines that are located adjacent the interconnected tear lines in the top panel for forming an adjacent flap that can be opened with the dispenser flap in the top panel.

17. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 14 which has interconnected tear lines in the top panel for forming a first dispenser flap and a second dispenser flap for removing containers from the carton when opened, with the insert having corresponding interconnected tear lines located adjacent the interconnected tear lines in the top panel for forming a first insert flap and a second insert flap which are respectively adjacent the first dispenser flap and the second dispenser flap in the top panel, with the first insert flap opening when a dispenser flap in the top panel is opened and with the second insert flap opening when the second dispenser flap in the top panel is opened.

18. (Original) The carton of claim 17 which has a finger flap formed by a tear line in the top panel adjacent the interconnected tear lines and a corresponding opening in the insert that is at least as large as the finger flap in the top panel.

19. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 18 in which the insert has a plurality of subsidiary tear lines parallel at least a substantial portion of the interconnected tear lines in the insert so that the combination of the interconnected tear lines and subsidiary tear lines are located in relation to the dispenser flaps in the top panel so as not to impede the opening of the first insert flap or the second insert flap when the adjacent dispenser flap in the top panel is opened.

20. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 18 in which the insert has a plurality of subsidiary tear lines located parallel to a substantial portion of the interconnected tear lines in the insert so as to permit the tearing of the first insert flap or the second insert flap so that it is capable of being torn open and extended inside the opening formed by tearing and opening the respective adjacent dispenser flap in the top panel, said subsidiary tear lines being located so as to compensate for any slight misalignment when the insert is located and secured to the top panel.

21.-35. (Canceled)

36. (Currently Amended) A paperboard carton with a first end and a second end for carrying a plurality of containers, the carton comprising:

(a) a bottom panel, top panel, a first side panel attached to the top panel by a first fold line, and a second side panel attached to the top panel by a second fold line, the first end of the carton being closed by a first top end flap attached to the top panel ~~by~~ along a first top end fold line, a first side end flap foldably attached to the first side panel, a ~~second~~ first side end flap foldably attached to the second side panel, a first bottom end flap foldably attached to the bottom panel, with means for securing the first top end flap, the first side end flap ~~foldably attached to the first side panel~~, the ~~second~~ first side end flap ~~foldably attached to the second side panel~~, and the first bottom end flap at the first end of the carton in the closed position, the second end of the carton being closed by a second top end flap attached to the top panel by a second top end fold line, a ~~third~~ second side end flap foldably attached to the first side panel, a ~~fourth~~ second side end flap foldably attached to the second side panel, a second bottom end flap foldably attached to the bottom panel, with means for securing the second top end flap, the ~~third~~ second side end flap ~~foldably attached to the first side panel~~, the ~~fourth~~ second side end flap ~~foldably attached to the second side panel~~, and the second bottom end flap at the second end of the carton in the closed position;

(b) said carton having a first handle aperture in the first top end flap and a second handle aperture in the second top end flap for carrying the carton when loaded with containers with the carton secured in the closed position, ~~the carton being defined with~~ the first side end flap having ~~a at least one~~ first side end aperture sufficiently aligned with the first handle aperture in said first top end flap so that a person's hand can be extended through the first handle aperture in said first top end flap and said ~~at least one~~ first side end aperture in the first side end flap and the carton being defined with the ~~third~~ second side end flap having a ~~third~~ at least one ~~second~~ side end aperture sufficiently aligned with the second handle aperture in said second top end flap so that a person's hand can be extended through the second handle aperture in said second top end flap and the ~~third~~ at least one ~~second~~ side end aperture in the second side end flap; and

(c) said carton having a first paperboard insert and a second paperboard insert, the first paperboard insert being secured to at least one of the (i) first top end flap and (ii) the first side end flap and the second paperboard insert being secured to at least one of the (i) second top

end flap and (ii) the third ~~second~~ side end flap; the first end having a first handle aperture in said first top end flap and the second end of the carton having a second handle aperture in said second top end flap, said first paperboard insert having a first insert aperture that is sufficiently aligned with the first handle aperture in said first top end flap and the first side end aperture in said first side end flap so that a person's hand can be inserted through the first handle aperture, the first side end aperture, and the first insert aperture when the carton is secured in the closed position and the second paperboard insert having a second insert aperture that is sufficiently aligned with the second handle aperture in said second top end flap and the third ~~second~~ side end aperture in said second side end flap so that a person's hand can be inserted through the second handle aperture, the second side end aperture, and the third ~~second~~ insert aperture when the carton is secured in the closed position, said first paperboard insert and said first side end flap reinforcing the first top end flap to form three layers of paperboard between the first top end fold line and the first handle aperture and the second paperboard insert and said third ~~second~~ side end flap reinforcing the second top end flap to form three layers of paperboard between the second top end fold line and the second handle aperture to preserve the integrity of said first handle aperture and said second handle aperture, respectively, when the carton is loaded with the plurality of containers.

37. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 36 in which the means for securing is glue.

38. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 36 in which the first and the second inserts are secured respectively to the first side end flap on the first end and to the second side end flap on the second end of the carton.

39. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 36 in which the first paperboard insert and the second paperboard insert are secured respectively to the first top end flap and the second top end flap.

40. (Canceled)

41. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 36 in which the first top end flap has an inside and outside surface and the second top end flap has an inside and outside surface and the first paperboard insert and the second paperboard insert are secured to the inside surface of the first top end flap and the second top end flap, respectively.

42. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 41 in which the first insert aperture and the second insert aperture are larger than the corresponding first handle aperture and the second handle aperture in the first top end flap and in the second top end flap.

43. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 42 which has interconnected tear lines in the top panel which extend into the first side panel and the second side panel to form a dispenser flap which when torn open allows the removal of containers from the carton.

44. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 43 in which the interconnected tear lines extend into the first side panel and the second side panel and are interconnected in said top panel to form two dispenser flaps.

45. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 44 in which a finger flap is formed by a tear line adjacent to a location in the interconnected tear lines that forms two flaps so that when the finger flap is opened the interconnected tear lines can be torn opening either or both dispenser flaps so containers can be removed from the carton.

46. (Previously Presented) The carton of claim 36 in which the first and second inserts extend across the top panel from the first top end flap to the second top end flap.